# *A Christian Taske.*

## A Sermon, Preached at the Funerall of Maister *Iohn Lawson*, *Gentleman*, *at* Prittlewell *in* Essex, the 28. of *December*. 1619.

By
SAMVEL SMITH, Minister of Gods Word at *Prittlewell* in *Essex*.

2. SAM. 14. 14.
*For we must all dye.*

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# TO THE VERTVOVS AND RELIGIOVS Gentlewoman, Miſtriſſe MARIE LAVVSON, *late wife to* Maiſter IOHN LAVVSON of Milton, *and her fiue Children, whom* I loue in the Truth.

(***)

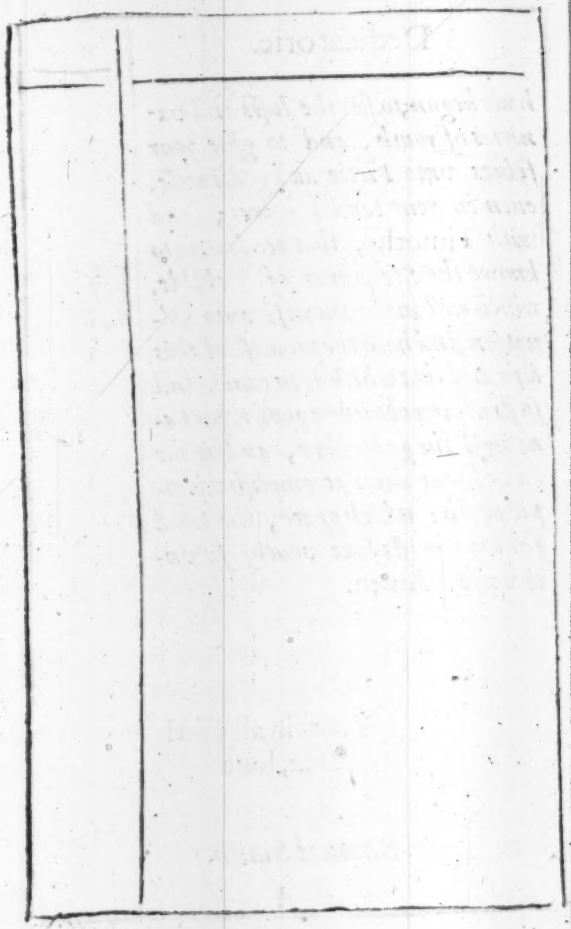
*INgratitude in the Scripture is a thing much condemned, and odious in the ſight of God. I deſire therfore, in ſome poore meaſure, to ſhewe my thankefulneſſe to*

*my wel-deſeruing friends, amongſt whom if I ſhould not number you, I ſhould much forget my ſelfe, your houſe hauing beene as the houſe of* Oneſiphorus *to me and mine. This is the beſt I haue where-with to requite your loue. The Sermon was preached at the Funerall of your louing Husband, and my kinde friend: Whoſe Sun being ſet, I know you cannot but lament your loſſe; but here is your comfort, the ſound experience you had of his godly and vertuous life. Let his departure mooue you to renew your Couenant with God, and to bee mindfull of your owne Mortality, that ſo you may* Number your daies aright, and apply your heart vnto wiſedome, *and may prouide againſt the reckoning day ſhall come. And you that are his hopefull Off-ſpring, let me exhort you to go forward as you haue*

*haue begun; to flie the luſts and vanities of youth, and to giue your ſelues vnto Pietie and godlineſſe, euen in your tender yeares; and with* Timothy, *that yee learne to knowe the Scriptures of a childe, which will make you wiſe vnto Saluation, and hath the promiſe of this life, and that which is to come. And ſo ſhall you obtaine a good report amongſt the godly here, and at the end of your daies, accompliſh a happie death: which grace, the Lord for his Chriſts ſake vouchſafe vnto vs all.* Amen.

Yours in all Chriſtian loue

*Samuel Smith.*



# A Funerall Sermon.

THe cuſtome of Funerals as they are ancient, ſo are they commendable. *Abraham* purchaſed a peece of ground of the *Hittites*, to bury his dead in: where himſelfe, and *Sara* his wife, with ſucceeding generations, *Izack*, *Iacob*, and *Ioſeph*, with great ſolemnity were buried, & mournfully lamented. And *Mary* is memorable in the Goſpell, for the box of oyntment ſhe prepared for Chriſts Funerall: and ſo are *Ioſeph* of *Arimathea*, and *Nicodemus*

Gen. 23.

*codemus* for the solemne preparation they made thereunto.

Now we do not, neither ought wee to vse these Funerall rites & exequies, as helps to the dead, but comforts to the liuing. And the principall ends of Funerals are these three:

Ends of Funerals three.

1 First, it is an office of humanity and Charity, to commit with honour the dead body to the earth from whence it came: a duty which euen the Heathen themselues haue carefully performed.

2 Secondly, it is a thing seemly and conuenient, with all reuerence to lay the dead Corps in the graue, which hath in time beene a liuing receptacle and temple for Gods Spirit to dwell in; wherein and by which, as liuely instruments, God hath beene

beene glorified, and his Church hath receiued much good: For so saith the Apostle, *Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the holy Ghost which is in you?* Now that body which hath beene so honoured in life, would with all due respect be interred. 1. Cor. 6. 19.

Thirdly, our faith is heereby confirmed in the Article of our Resurrection; for wee lay downe our bodyes in the Earth vnder hope, that this mortall of ours shall one day put on Immortality: Confessing, and professing with holy Iob, *That we shal one day see God, not with others, but with these same eyes.* And these are the most principall ends of Funerals. 3 Iob. 19.

And now at this time hath the Lord assembled vs heere together, to bee exercised about this

this duty, as the last duty wee owe vnto our christian brother, a duty which others in Gods due time shall performe vnto vs.

Borne deafe and dambe.

Concerning whose life and death, it is requisite I should speake something. And howsoeuer by reason of his infirmity, as you all know what it was, I confesse I shall be something straighted: yet because the Lord doth honor them that honour him, and giues a good name and report vnto a good life, I haue a little boxe of oyntment to bee powred out vpon him: neither dare I so wrong him that deserued it, your selues that expect it, or my selfe that owe it, as to bee altogether silent.

For his life, he was of a most louing and milde nature, beloued

ued of all. His life, for ought I could euer heare, was vnspotted of the world, and his cariage generally towardes all was so wise, so sober, and discreete, as might be pleasing vnto all.

His loue to the Ministers of Gods Word, his pittie to the poore, his ready seruice to his friends, and forwardnesse euery way to do good in the place he liued, will in time make knowne his losse amongst vs.

And howsoeuer it pleased the Lord to humble him with those defects of nature aboue others; I doubt not but the Lord did make a gracious supply by his owne Spirit; neuer requiring more then he makes vs capable of, but is wōderful in al his waies and workes, and can and doth without meanes, and contrary

vnto

vnto meanes, effect what is the purpose of his owne will. Carefull he was both in priuate and publike to serue the Lord.

In priuate, besides the exercise of Family duties, performed by another, hee would often betake himselfe to his priuate Deuotions. Where if any doubt, what manner of seruice or sacrifice this man was able to offer vnto God; the Apostle shall make the answer: *The Spirit helpeth our infirmities, for wee know not how to pray as wee ought,* (no not the best:) *but the Spirit it selfe makes request for vs, with sighes that cannot be expressed.* Rom.8.26.

How carefull was hee to frequent these publike assemblies, to come into Gods house, and with blinde *Bartimæus*, to bee where Christ was to passe?

And

And how reuerend his behauiour was, being in this place, you all do know. Yea, his desire to come thē many times whēby reason of his Infirmity, he might haue bin well excused, together with his reuerend behauiour being come: I doubt not but herein the Lord will make him one day a witnesse in iudgement, against many in this Congregation; who make euery occasion sufficient to keepe them from Gods house; and when they are come, doe spend their time in sleepe, if not in other light behauiour.

For the time of his sickenesse, and so for his death, the Lord did giue vnto him a great measure of patience, and Christian courage, willingly entertaining in himselfe the sentēce of death, and

and accordingly desired to fit himselfe thereunto: frequent and often did he betake himselfe to his knees, and to praier alone, and as occasion was offered, either by my selfe or others, hee still desired the same. So that in the iudgement of Charity, wee cannot but hope that he is now at rest in the Lord, that his death was blessed; beeing with *Simeon*, desirous to depart in peace, and so wee leaue him to the God of *Peace*.

But this is not the end wherefore wee are here met together, to commend him that is gone, who rests from his labour, and whose workes doe follow him: But that wee our selues might receiue some part of holy instruction against that time it shall be said vnto vs, as it hath beene

already

already vnto him: *Come giue accompt of thy Stewardship, thou shalt be no longer Steward.* And to this end I haue made choyce of a Scripture as followeth, for our present instruction.

## Psalme 90. 12.

*Teach vs, O Lord, to Number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts vnto wisedome.*

THis Psalm is a praier of *Moses the Man of God*, as it appeareth in the Inscription or title of this Psalme, *A Prayer of Moses the Man of God.* The Author or Inditer of it, as of all other Scriptures, is the Spirit of God.

The Summe of it is nothing else, but a pittifull complaint of *Moses*, and the *Israelites*, that they

they make in the wildernesse vnto God: where they were miserably wasted and consumed, by reason of Gods heauy hand vppon them for their sinnes. And withall, an humble suite and petition vnto God, that he would in mercy bee intreated to spare them, & to be gracious vnto thē.

Parts of the Psalm.

The whole Psalme may be diuided into two parts, a *Preface* and a *Narration*.

The *Preface* is layd downe in the two first verses of this Psalm. Wherin they acknowledge that God had beene very mercifull vnto their forefathers, *Abraham*, *Izack*, and *Iacob*, and to their posterity, in protecting them from their enemies, and many dangers, euen for his owne Names sake, and his mercifull couenant vnto them.

The second part is the *Narration*, in the which *Moses* sets downe the common Mortality of Mankind, how vaine & short the life of man is.

First generally, verse. 3. comparing it to a *Watch*, to *Grasse*, to a *Dreame*, or *Thought*: Things of little moment, and of short continuance.

Secondly, in particular, that their estate was worse then the common estate of Mankinde. Because, whereas Mankinde by the ordinary course of Nature and of mans life, did attaine vnto the age of seuenty yeares: their life was shortned by the iudgements of God vpon them for their sins; from the 7. v. to the 13.

And thirdly, heere is layde downe an humble petition of *Moses*, and the people vnto the Lord,

Lord, that hee would in mercy returne vnto them, and grant them a gracious deliuerance, & his former fauour; from the 13. verse, to the end of the Psalme.

The occasion of the Psalme.

For the Occasion of this Psalme, it is like it was made by *Moses*, when as the Spies returned from searching the land of *Canaan. Num.* 14.

Where it appeares, how the Lord commandeth *Moses* to send twelue men of the heads of the Tribes of *Israel*, to search the land of *Canaan*. They returne after forty dayes, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now all of them, *Iosuah* and *Caleb* onely excepted, did discourage the people; telling thē that their Cities were strong & walled: and that there were the sonnes of *Anack*, men of renowne for might and

ſtrength, the poſterity of *Giants*. Now vpon this report the people murmured againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron* exceedingly, wiſhing that they had died in *Egypt*. Therfore the Lord hearing this their murmuring, was angry with this people, and told *Moſes*, that of all that had ſeene his Miracles in *Egypt* vpon *Pharaoh* and his people, there ſhould not one of them come into the land of *Canaan*: But that all the *Iſraelites* (*Ioſuah* and *Caleb* onely excepted) aboue the age of twenty yeares ſhould die in the wilderneſſe, bee conſumed, and cleane ſwept away. Which iudgement the Lord accordingly inflicted vpon them, ſending amongſt them fiery Serpents and Scorpions, with the peſtilence which had now at this time almoſt waſted

wasted and consumed them.

Where from the occasion of this Psalme, we may note what a grieuous sinne it is in the sight of God, for those that haue had experiẽce of Gods mercy in former times, to call Gods power & prouidence into question, & to despaire of Gods mercy in time of triall.

*Doctr.* 1. It is a grieuous sinne to doubt of Gods loue, hauing had experience of it.

This people of *Israel* they had experience many times of Gods mercy, power, and prouidence towards them, deliuering them out of the hands of cruell *Pharaoh* in *Egypt*; how the Lord did fight their battails for them; in time of famine giuing thẽ *Manna*, bread from heauen; in time of drouth giuing them water out of a Rock: many waies had they experience of his mercy and goodnesse towards them.

And now to doubt of his loue, and to call his prouidence in queſtiõ, whether or no the Lord would or could ſtand by them as formerly hee had done, and bring them according to his promiſe into the land of *Canaan*: oh this was ſuch a ſinne in them, as the Lord would in no wiſe ſhould eſcape vnpuniſhed.

*Vſe.* Now if all things that are written, are written for our inſtruction, then let the iudgement of God vpon this people bee a warning to vs all, that wee take heede of their ſin, leſt one day we partake of their puniſhment. It is the vſe the Apoſtle maketh of the ſame example: *Neither murmure ye as ſome of them murmured, and were deſtroyed of the Deſtroyer.* But let vs vppon experience of Gods former mercies

1. Cor. 10. 10.

mercies, bee incouraged to rely vpon our gracious God in time to come; and whatſoeuer the trials are that the Lord ſhal lay vpon vs, let the remembrance of Gods former loue arme vs againſt doubting and diſtruſt. It was that which armed *Dauid* againſt *Goliah*. And let vs take heede of deſpairing of Gods mercy, & ſo to murmure againſt the Lord, leſt wee doe thereby prouoke him to anger as this people did.

Thus much for the occaſion of this Pſalme.

The Text in hand is part of that praier which *Moſes* and the reſt of the people made vnto God for fauour and mercy, that the Lord would make them to conſider of the ſhortneſſe and vncertainty of their time, that ſo

ſo they might make an holy vſe of their life, to repent and to turne vnto God.

And it is all one, as if they ſhould haue ſaid: O Lord, ſeeing our life is ſo ſhort, and ſo vncertaine, and fraught with ſo many troubles and dangers: we beſeech thee teach vs that heauenly knowledge, that wee may throughly conſider, and be perſwaded of the ſhortneſſe of our life: that ſo laying aſide the exceſſiue care of the things of this world, *we may apply our harts vnto wiſedom*, that is, to repent of our ſins paſt, to be humbled for thē, to caſt vp our accoūt, & in ſome good meaſure to fit our ſelues for our diſſolution and change, whenſoeuer the ſame ſhal come.

The

The text hath two parts.
1 A prayer of *Moſes* & the reſt of the *Iſraelites*: *Teach vs, O Lord, &c.*
2 The reaſon, or the end of this praier: *That wee may apply our hearts unto wiſedome.*

The text diuided.

In the firſt of theſe wee haue two things to be conſidered of vs.

1 The perſons praying.
2 Their petition.

*Teach vs.* That is, *Moſes* the *man of God*, and the reſt of the Iſraelites the Church and people of God. They are the Petitioners here. And what is it that they intreate for, at Gods hand but

1 The perſons praying.

but this, That the Lord would teach them to *Number their daies*? That is, to perſwade them of the ſhortneſſe and vncertainty of their life, that ſo they might in ſome good meaſure be prepared for their end.

*Doct.* No man by Nature can Number his daies vntil Gods Spirit inſtruct him.

Heereby giuing vs to vnderſtand, that it is not in the breaſt of any mortall man by Nature to haue this knowledge, vntill the Spirit of God, become our Schoole-maiſter: it is the peculiar gift of God, and it is he alone that muſt inſtruct vs: Otherwiſe our fooliſh hearts are altogither void of this knowledge. This was the reaſon wherefore *Dauid* prayeth thus; *Lord let me know my end and the meaſure of my daies, let me know how long, I haue to liue.* Pſal. 39. 4.

And indeed wee haue many examples

examples of this in the word of God; that wee haue not this knowledge by nature, vntill the Lord do inſtruct vs in it, and his Spirit become our School-maiſter: but on the contraty naturally are forgetfull that we ſhall die, neuer thinke of our latter end, nor of the ſhortneſſe and vncertainty of our being heere, and what ſhall become of our poore Soules in death.

This was the caſe of the rich man remembred in the Goſpel, a man exceeding wiſe for the world, but a ſtarke foole towards God. *Hee Numbred* not his daies aright, but reckoned them by the groſſe ſumme, euery day for a yeare, and one yeare for many: and yet alas! poore man he enioyed not one day, but euen that night had an end put vnto

Luk. 12. 19.

vnto his life. This was the case of the vngracious seruant, our Sauiour speaks of, that put far from him the comming of his Lord, and so fell to eating and drinking, and beating his fellows, and so was taken vnprepared. And what shall I say of the foolish Virgins, who neuer thought of heauen, till it was too late? nor of the comming of the Bride-groome vntil he was entred, and they for euer excluded? Examples indeed very pregnant, to shew what is our Naturall condition, in that we are very ready to forget the shortnesse and vncertainty of our life.

Luk. 12. 45

Math. 25.

Yea our own experience, proues this to be too true; for what man is there liuing, be he neuer so old, & hath one foote already

dy in the graue, yet thinkes hee may rub out another yeare? and when that is past, a yeare to that, and so indeed many yeares? a manifest proofe that we are naturally void of this knowledge *Moses* prayeth for. The Reasons of this Doctrine are:

First, Death tendeth to the destruction of nature, and therefore against nature, euery liuing Creature abhorring the destruction of it selfe. *Reas.* 1.

Secondly the remembrance of Death makes a man sin fearefully, and damps all our pleasures; and therefore no marueile we cannot endure the thoughts of death: the remembrance of it being bitter vnto a man whose heart is set vpon the world, and the pleasures of the same, and hath no hope of a better *Reas.* 2.

better life. Such an one knowes that death neuer comes but as a iaylor to hale to prison, from whence they shall bee brought to execution in the Lords iudging day.

*Reas.* 3. Thirdly the putting far from vs the thought of death and the remembrance of our latter end, brings matter of great aduantage vnto Satan in his temptations, and therefore labours by all meanes possible to keepe the remembrance of the same from vs. So then whether wee consider that death tends to the destruction of nature : that it damps our pleasures, that satan himselfe labours to keepe from vs the thoughts of our latter end : wee must conclude, that it is not in any, by Nature to be acquainted with this knowledg till

till the Lord by his Spirit doe teach it vs.

This may ſerue to reproue thoſe that thinke it ſo eaſie a matter to *Number their daies*; but let ſuch conſider *Moſes* was a man endued with ſingular wiſedome and knowledge more familiarly acquainted with his maker then any we reade of: yet confeſſeth his owne ignorance of this point, and intreats the Lord that he would cauſe him to know this, that hee would teach him to number his daies aright, that, is that the Lord would ſet before his eies, the exceeding ſhortneſſe of his life. *Vſe* 1.

But this may ſeeme ſtrange, that *Moſes* ſhould beg for this, and intreate the Lord to giue him this knowledge. Did not *Obiect.*

*Moſes* know the number of his daies? Could he ſet down, how long *Adam* liued, *Enoch*, *Methuſalem*, *Abraham*, *Izack*, and *Iacob*; and could not *Moſes* number his owne daies?

*Reſpon.* I Anſwere, that neither *Moſes*, nor the wiſeſt man that euer liued, though hee bee moſt cunning in all kind of Arithmeticke, ſo as hee knoweth the nature of the ſtars, their diſtances, motions, longitude, latitude, & altitudes, can skill of this Numbring, vnleſſe the Spirit of God be his Schoole-maiſter, vnleſſe God giue him wiſedome and grace from aboue, to perſwade vs of the ſhortneſſe of our time, and of the ſuddaine and ſpeedy comming of death, no man can number his daies: & therefore as I ſayd before, this may teach

teach vs all to begge and craue this at Gods hand, that hee would giue vs this wisedome.

Secondly this may serue for our instruction, that seeing *Moses*, and the people of God acknowledge their ignorance and forgetfulnesse of this poynt, and withall pray to God that he would giue them this wisedome; Oh let vs lay this Doctrine to heart, & try our selues if we be not as forgetfull of this point, and doe promise long life vnto our selues, and put far from vs the thoughts of death: if we finde it to bee our case, let vs with *Moses*, heere intreate the Lord to giue vs of this knowledge, to teach vs, and perswade vs of the exceeding shortnesse of our life, and the great vncertainty of it, that so *Vse 2.*

wee may number our daies aright, and apply our harts vnto wisedome: for vntill the Lord, doe open our eies wee shall neuer see it, nor make such a right vse of it as wee ought, being naturally so foolish and ignorant.

Hitherto of the persons praying, now we come to the petition it selfe.

*To Number our daies.* Wherein we are to note two things: First, that the life of man in this life is but short; *Moses* mentioneth not yeares, or moneths, or weeks, but daies: Secondly that the same are numbred with God.

*Doct.* Mans life is short.

First obserue heere, after what manner the holy Ghost doth reckon or measure the life of

of man, not by the mete-wand of yeares, or the ell of moneths, but by a ſhorter meaſure, the inch of daies: and theſe daies are not onely *few*, but euill, as *Iacob* ſaith to *Pharaoh*, *Few and euill haue the daies of my Pilgrimage bene.* There are as many little skuls in *Golgotha*, as great ones; and parents as often follow their children to the graue, as children their parents. And in the Scripture, our life is compared to ſuch things, as are moſt fleeting and of the leaſt continuance. If wee reade but ouer this Pſalme, it will cleare this truth: it is called yeſterday, gone aſſoone as come; it is likened to a *watch* in the Night, to a *Thought*, to a *Dreame*, to *Nothing*, to *Graſſe* that withereth; to *Smoke* that vaniſheth, to a

Gen. 47. 9.

Pſ. 90. v. 4. 6. v 9. Eſay 40. 6.

*Spiders web*, soone swept away;
Hos.13.3. to a *Flower* that fadeth: to a
Iob 7.6. *Vapor* that is soone dispersed.
Iob 14.2. So true is that of holy *Iob*; *Man that is borne of a woman, hath but a short time to liue*, and his life is miserable. Our life may well bee compared vnto *Ionas* his *Gourd*: no sooner come to ripenesse, but it vanisheth away; & if we should deduct out of mans life the time of our sleepe, the time of Infancy, and the daies of our vanity, it would appeare that our time weere exceeding short,

Now the Reasons wherefore God hath appointed mans time to be so short, are:

*Reas.* 1. First, that the consideration of the shortnesse of our time may stir vs vp to the doing of good: wee do not know how long

long the threed of our life may bee drawen out; it may be, it is neare the last cast, and the feete of those that carry out our Brethren & Sisters to their beds of rest, the graue, are ready to performe the like duty for vs. Now who would not striue to be rich in all good workes, to further his reckoning, if he knew that his time were so short? O beloued, this is the reason why the Lord doth keepe back the knowledge of these times, to that end wee we might euer bee ready, euer prepared, & euer haue our lamps of good workes burning, against the day of our dissolution come. Acts 5.

The second reason is, to withdraw our harts from the loue of the world, and the things of the world, when we shall consider, how vncertaine wee are in *Reas.* 2.

the enioying of the world: many times when wee propound to our selues the greatest content in the things of this life, the Lord either takes them from vs or vs from them: who doth not see how ready we are to nestle our selues vpon the worlds lap: and with the rich man in the Gospell, to secure our selues in our riches for many yeares to come, erecting tabernacles to our owne lusts? what would wee do, if our liues were certaine vnto vs, and wee assured to enioy our wealth without any change? Surely then would our hearts bee fast knit vnto the world, and men would desire none other heauen here.

*Reas. 3.* Thirdly and lastly, the Lord in great wisedome hath so appointed, that our time should not

not only be short but vncertain heere, that the godly might euer liue in an expectation of an happy deliuerance from sinne, Sathan, and the molestation of wicked men; their rod shall not alwayes rest vpon them: the Lord will deliuer them, yea and it may be very speedily: whereas if our liues now might extend to the yeares of such as liued before the flood, long would be their tortures and troubles they daily sustaine from wicked men. As also to comfort the harts of the godly, that how soeuer the rage of the wicked is great, yet their time is but short.

The vses follow.

First, seeing that our life is but short, and our time vncertaine of our liuing heere: heere *Vse 1.*

is

is matter of reproofe vnto those that seeme to haue made a league with death, and to be at an agreement with the graue, that deferre their Repentance vntill the last; promising to themselues many yeares to come, when indeed Gods decree is already gone out against them, and the hand writing is already fixed vpon the wall; Oh! That such men would remember, that mans life is short and his daies but few, they but tenants at will: And that howsoeuer this earthly tabernacle of ours, may bee patched and peeced vp for a time, it will bee but for a time, and will at last fall into the place of darkenesse, and we shall make our beds in the darke. Which may teach vs to looke out betime before it be

be too late, and to think of this dissolution before it come, that whensoeuer this earthly tabernacle of ours shall decay, wee may haue a building not made with hands, but eternall in the heauens.

How many amongst vs hath the Lord from time to time, warned to thinke of this time, some by one sickneſſe, some by another infirmity, some by the inevitable messenger and Herald of death age it selfe, whose gray haires doe summon them to the graue? yet alas are euer dreaming of a long life, and are euer putting from them the thoughts of death. Sometimes death hath come a far off, and then hath taken a friend; sometimes he hath come nearer, and then hee hath taken a kinsman; some-

ſometimes hee comes into our owne houſes, and takes either the wife or the husband of thy boſome, or thy children, the fruite of thy body; & wilt thou think thy ſelfe priuiledged from the ſtroke of death? No, no, thou muſt ſhortly act thy part likewiſe vpon the ſtage of mortality, when then to ſeeke for grace it will be too late.

*Vſe 2.* Secondly, this doctrine of the ſhortneſſe and vncertainty of our liues may ſerue for our inſtruction, to teach vs at all times, to bee in a readineſſe: It is the ſame vſe our Sauiour makes of the ſame doctrine: *Be yee prepared, for the Son of man will come in an howre when yee thinke not of.* Are our liues ſo ſhort & nothing almoſt ſhorter? Let vs then prepare for death

Luk. 12. 40

death, *for we muſt all die.*

2. Sam. 14. 14.

It was the ſpeech of the woman of *Tekoa* vnto *Dauid*, when ſhee went about to appeaſe his anger he had conceiued againſt his ſonne; and it is that which ſhall one day bee found true of all the poſterity of mankinde, as the way of all fleſh, which may teach vs euer to bee in a readineſſe. Wee know what was the condition of the fooliſh virgins, who being found vnprepared at the Bride-groomes comming, were for euer ſhut out of the marriage Chamber. Thou doeſt not know when, or after what manner the Lord will come vnto thee: thou maiſt be murdred in the field, as *Abel* was; loſe thy life in thy chaire, as *Eli* did; die in the Temple, as *Senacherib* did; thy houſe may fall vppon thy head,

Gen. 4. 1. Sa. 4. 18. Eſay 37. 37.

head, as it did vpon the children of *Iob*: or thou maiſt be ſpoyled of vnreaſonable beaſts, as the little children that ſcoffed *Elias* were of the Beares: when thou goeſt forth in the morning, thou doeſt not know what may befall thee ere the euening, in the euening ere the morning. Which way ſoeuer wee goe, death euer followeth vs, and is euer ready to ſeize vpon vs. And of this we are euer ſure, that it will not bee long, but wee muſt ſtoope to the ſtroke of death, ſooner, or later, die we muſt: how carefull then ſhould wee bee, that when the Lord commeth, he may finde vs ſo doing, euer prepared when our change ſhall come?

Heb. 9. 27.

*Our dayes.* *Moſes* meaneth that time which the Lord in mercy giueth vnto man in this world, be

bee it long or ſhort.

*Doctr.* Our dayes are numbred with God,

The Doctrine is, that as our life is ſhort, ſo this ſhort time or few dayes of ours are numbred with God, the Lord hath ſet bounds vnto them which wee cannot paſſe. *Is there not* (ſaith *Iob*) *an appoynted warfare for man vpon earth? Are not his dayes as the dayes of an hireling?* And againe, *All the dayes of my appoynted warfare I will wayte till my change ſhall come.* And ſo ſaith *Moſes* heere, *Teach vs, O Lord, to number our dayes*: That is, that time that thou in mercy affoordeſt vnto man to liue vpon earth. Euery man hath his time ſet him, and his bounds appointed him, which he cannot paſſe. And as it was ſaid of *Balthazor, God hath numbred thy kingdome*: ſo it may be ſayd of euery man,

Iob 7.1.

Iob 14.14.

Dan. 5.25.

man, God hath numbered the dayes of our life. It is ſayde of *Moſes*, that he *died in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord.* The time, the manner, and all other circumſtances that belong vnto our deaths, they are al of them decreed & appointed of God. What is the reaſon that *Aſa* died of a ſickneſſe in his feet, far from his heart, and hath the helpe of the Phyſition? His time was come: whereas *Hezechias* was ſore ſicke at the very heart, and euen at the point of death, yet liues many yeares after, but becauſe his time was not come? One is grieuouſly wounded, and dies not; another, the cutting of a corne kils him: what is the cauſe, but the performance of Gods appointed time in both? Our life then, and the yeares, moneths,

2. Chro. 16. 12.

moneths, weekes and dayes; yea, the houres, & minutes of houres that wee are to liue heere, are numbred with God, and determined with him.

The reasons that follow will cleare this truth vnto vs.

*Reas.* 1. First of all, because of Gods prouidence, who doth not onely behold all things as a Spectator, but ordereth & disposeth of all things, according to the counsell of his owne will: for so saith the Prophet: *Is there any euill in the Citie, that the Lord hath not done?* Amos 3.6. And againe: *The Sparrow cannot light on the ground without his prouidence; the very hayres of your heads are numbred with him.* Mat. 10.30. It is seene in a little handfull of meale, and a little oyle, in the caluing of Hinds, and feeding of young Rauens;

yea, and the falling of sparrows to the ground: in all which the Lord hath his prouidence to be seene. Now if the Lord do manifest his wisedome, power, and prouidence in the things of the meanest nature, much more is the same in greater, such as is the death of his seruants.

*Reas.2.* Secondly, if the Lord had not Numbred our *Daies*, such men as are louers of the world and of their pleasures more then God, they would neuer leaue the world, but seeke to haue their happinesse heere: Neither would such as are in misery and distresse waite till God should worke their deliuerance, but seeke their owne death to put an end vnto their troubles. Therefore the Lord in great wisedome, and loue vnto

vs,

vs, both to weane vs from the world, as also to stay vs in time of our greatest distresse, hath taught vs that hee hath set bounds vnto our life, and numbred our daies, which wee cannot passe. Wee come to the vses.

*Vse* 1. First, this may serue to reproue such as thinke that this life of ours, may either be shortned or lengthned by meanes, beyond the decree of God, a meere fantasy; for all our daies are numbred with him. What though a man lay violent hands vpon himselfe, and so become his own vnnaturall, bloudy executioner, euen therein he is but the instrument of the Lords wrath to put an end to that life the Lord indeed hath finished. And the like may bee said of

Magistracy; though *Pilate* hath the Soueraignty of iudgement, yet hee hath not the Soueraignety ouer life, as Christ tels him. *Go tell the fox, I walke to day* and *to morrow, &c.* So that if the Magistrate do saue a man that is appointed to dy, it is but secretly to fulfill Gods decree concerning him whose time is not yet come; or if hee cut him off, euen therein is hee likewise but Gods Minister to execute what God hath purposed to be done.

And surely this may serue likewise to reproue such as dreame and dote vpon secondary causes, and neuer looke vpon Gods counsell and decree: And this makes many when their friends are taken away, to cry out of want of care in their

*keepers*

*keepers*: or want of skill in the Phyſitian, or abſence of friends: and ſay with *Mary* to Chriſt, *Lord, if thou haddeſt bene heere, my brother had not died.* Thus do men looke to ſecond cauſes, and not to the Lord, without whoſe counſell and appointment, nothing can come to paſſe: And heerein manifeſt in themſelues palpable ignorance, that they are altogither vnacquainted with the knowledge of God & his word: who ſhould haue learned that a Sparrow cannot fall to the ground, without his prouidence. Iohn 11.

Indeed I confeſſe that ſuch meanes as God hath appointed for the preſeruation of life muſt not bee diſpiſed, but men muſt vſe them, and it may bee their ſin, to neglect them: yet they

must not bee doted vpon: vse them, but trust not in them. It is the Lord that must make them effectuall and wholesome vnto vs: and will blesse the meanes whensoeuer they shall serue for the performance of his will.

*Vse 2.* Secondly seeing the Lord hath numbred our dayes and set bounds vnto our life, which wee cannot passe: This may minister matter of comfort vnto Gods seruants, that our life is in Gods hand: It is hee that hath giuen it, and it is he that taketh it. We see the aduersaries of the Righteous increase daily, rising vp against the godly, digging pits before them, and imagine mischeeuous practises against them: but what of this? they do but trauaile in vaine, if the Lord do

doe not giue them leaue; if hee make them not his rod for the chaſtiſing of his ſeruants, they ſhal not hurt vs. Indeed if their power were as great as their malice, there ſhould not a godly man be ſuffered to liue in the world: But now the conſideration of this, that our life is hid in Gods hand, this may ſtay vs againſt their rage. Why then are wee ſo fearefull, when the *Senacheribs* of the world do breath out their threatning againſt vs? remember ſtill that God hath limited thy days, and that thy life is in his keeping. This truth is further cleared by that of the Apoſtle when hee ſaith: *Doubtleſſe againſt thy holy Son Ieſus, whom thou haſt anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and people of Iſ-* Acts 4. 27.

*rael, gathered themselues together to do whatsoeuer thy hand & counsell determined before to bee done.* So that it appeares, that wicked men are but Gods rod and ministers to accomplish his decree; for the very yeares, moneths, dayes and houres of the life of man are determined of God.

*Vse 3.* Thirdly and lastly, since our life is determined, and our daies are numbered, and that the time of our departure hence is known vnto God, and not vnto vs; certaine to him, vncertaine to vs: Oh! how should this make vs prepare our selues against that time shall come? Surely this is it that should bee the principall care of a Christian while hee liueth heere, that it may goe well with him in death: When nothing will stand a man in steede but

*Note.*

but a good conſcience, excuſing vs before God, and giuing in teſtimony, that it hath beene our principall care to walke with God. Oh! this is it that will cheere vp our hearts when outward comforts faile; to ſay with *Hezechiah*, *Remember Lord that I haue walked before thee in truth, and with an vpright heart.* It is not thy coſtly buildings, thy ſumptuous apparel, rich friends, or large poſſeſſions, that will now auaile: onely a good conſcience, waſhed and purged by faith, that wil auaile in that day. Other things may procure honor vpon earth, but they can neuer procure happineſſe in heauen. Oh then! in Gods name, let our liues be pretious vnto vs, we doe not know how long wee ſhall enioy them. It will be too late

Eſay 38.3.

late to cry, and call, and knock, when our ſun is ſet vpon vs, whē the *Bride-groome* is entered, and wee haue made our beds in the darke: for after death there is no redemption.

*Our dayes.*

*Teach vs, O Lord, to number our dayes.*

Before we leaue this petition, we haue yet one thing more to bee conſidered of vs, and that is this: how *Moſes* cals our life by the name of *our dayes.*

Two daies

In the Scripture wee haue mention made of two *dayes*, the *Lords day*, and *mans day*. Of the former ſpeaketh the Apoſtle *Peter*, in his ſecond Epiſtle, the third chapter, and the tenth ver. ſaying: *The day of the Lord ſhall come*

2 Pet. 3. 10
Luk. 19. 42

*come as a theefe in the night, &c.* Of the other speaketh our Sauiour of *Ierusalem: Oh that thou haddest knowne in this thy day, the things that belong vnto thy peace.*

Now by *mans day* is meant the time of a mans life the Lord doth vouchsafe vnto a man to repent in, to be spent in his seruice, and to bee improued to his glory; as it is indeed the principal end of our being here, to improue this talent of *Time*, as all other Gods gifts to the aduantage of our master: and this time of our life is called *Ours*, because it seemes to be giuen vnto man: and al that time the Lord seems to be silent and still.

But afterwards comes the *Lords day*, when man shall be put to silence, and the Lord onely shall bee exalted; when hee will bring

bring euery work to iudgement, with euery secret thing, whether it be good or euill.

*Doct.* God doth giue vnto man a time to repent, which must not bee omitted.

Hence wee may conclude a most necessary instruction, and that is this: that God doth giue vnto all men a *Day* or time, wherein they may get grace and repentance, and improoue the same to the saluation of their soules: And that the same is not to bee neglected and let slip of vs; which if it bee, there is then no redemption, *For after death there is no redemption.*

And to confirme this truth vnto vs, we haue many places of holy Scripture, wherein it may euidently appeare, not only that man hath his day or time allotted him of God, but also that man ought to improue the same to an holy vse, & to a right end.

*Seeke*

*Seeke the Lord* (ſaith *Eſay*) *while he may be found, and call vpon him while he is neare:* wherein it appeares, that there is a time when the Lord will bee found, and is neare vnto vs: and when is that but now in life? For after death the Lord will not be found, then there remaines no place of repentance, though men ſeeke it with teares. Let vs ſee againe what the Lord ſaith to ſuch as diſpiſe Wiſedoms call: *Becauſe I haue called, and ye refuſed: I haue ſtretched out my hand, and none would regard: Yee ſhall call vpon me, but I will not anſwer: They ſhal ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find mee.* Wherein the Lord doth manifeſtly declare, that if men neglect the time, in the which he doth call, they ſhould one day call & cry for mercy, but ſhould not

Eſay 55.6. 7.

Heb. 12. 17.

Pro. 1. 24. v. 28.

not obtaine it. To this agreeth the most patheticall speech of our Sauiour to *Ierusalem*: *Oh that thou hadst knowne in this (thy day) the things that belong vnto thy peace! but now they are hid from thy eyes.* *Ierusalem* had her *Day*: that is, her time appoynted of God: wherein *Ierusalem* might haue beene made a glorious Citie, had shee made a right vse of the Lords mercies shewed vnto her: had shee imbraced the message of the Prophets from the Lord; had she aduanced piety and religion, sanctified the Lords Sabbaths, releeued the poore, comforted the afflicted, executed iudgement and righteousnesse in that Citie: Oh! how would the Lord haue honoured that people? But now in steed of iustice, oppression; in steed of mercy,

cy, cruelty: and so there beeing found amongst thē the neglect of his worship, the contempt of his Prophets, and all manner of prophaneneſſe; the Lord hath a *Day* to visit thē for these things, when hee will bring iudgement and desolation vpon them, and the Lord threatens them thus: *Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till you die, saith the Lord of Hosts:* giuing them to vnderstand, that in as much as they made light of the admonitions of the Lords Prophets, and the meanes of grace that hee in mercy had offered vnto them, there should now be left them no time to repent in, till he had destroyed them. Esa. 22.14

And to this duty of redeeming the time, and of making an holy vse of the season of grace, that

thatis offered vnto vs,we are ofte exhorted by the Apoſtle: *Conſidering the ſeaſon, it is now time that wee ſhould awake from ſleepe, for now is our ſaluation nearer then when we beleeued:* and again, *The night is paſt, the day is at hand, let vs caſt away the workes of darkneſſe, and put vpon vs the armor of light.* And, *While wee haue time* (ſaith *Paul*) *let vs doe good vnto all.* And, *To day if yee will heare his voyce, harden not your hearts.* All theſe teſtimonies of Scripture, as a cloud of witneſſes, they all ſerue to confirme vnto vs, the vndoubted truth of this doctrine, that man hath his *Day* & time affoorded him from God, which hee muſt carefully improue to his glory; which time, when it is once paſt, it will then bee too late to repent, and ſeeke

Rom. 13. 11.

v. 12.

Gal. 6. 10.

Heb. 3. 7.

ſeeke for mercy. And vnto theſe I might note diuers more of the ſame nature, one more for al, euē that of the Prophet bringing in the Lord ſpeaking after this mā-ner: Becauſe (ſaith he) *I wold haue purged thee, & thou waſt not purged; thou ſhalt not be purged, till I haue cauſed my wrath to fall vpon thee.*

A fearefull threatning, able to pierce a heart of ſteel, to conſider that ſuch as neglect and deſpiſe the gracious call of the Lord when he offers fauour and mercy vnto vs, and haue a long time dallied with his patience and long ſuffering, which ſhould haue led men to Repentance, wil come too late, when ſighs & teares wil not preuaile, but that the gate of grace and mercy is for euer ſhut vpon them. Oh that wee might bee affected a-

right with the consideration of this one thing, of the great danger of neglecting the meanes of our saluation when the same is offered vnto vs. But the reasons that follow, will serue for the further clearing of the point vnto vs, and proue the necessity of the duty.

*Reas. 1.* First heereby the Lord will manifest his mercy towards the vessels of mercy, vouchsafing vnto them an happy season of grace, wherein they may improue their graces, to the great aduantage of their maister, and work out their owne saluation; giuing vnto them also the Ministery of his word, and other helps and meanes by the which they may be brought home vnto him.

Now the Lord vouchsafing vnto

vnto man such meanes of grace and saluation, it must needs stand with his iustice to punish the wilfull comtempt of it, with a perpetuall deniall of Mercy.

Secondly, the Lord doth this to the end the wicked might be left without excuse in that day, when the Lord shall euen appeale vnto the consciences of sinners, that he hath gigen them a *day* to themselues, euen an happy season of grace, wherein they might haue proued good husbands vnto their owne soules, and stored vp aboundance of grace against their reckoning day: Now when they shal abuse the Lords mercy heerein, neglect his gracious call, make light accompt of his ordinance, and spend

*Reas.* 2.

their health & strength & all, to all manner of licentiousnes: Oh how iust shall the Lord bee in bringing vpon such heauy iudgments: thus did the Lord threaten *Iezabel: I gaue her space to repent of her fornication, and shee repented not: therefore I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit Adultery with her.* And againe, *Because I haue called, and yee haue refused, therefore the time shall come that yee shall call and cry, & I will not answere.* And this may the Lord in iustice bring vpon euery soule that reiected grace in the time of grace, when the Lord hath offered the same vnto him.

Reu. 2. 21. 22.

Pro 1. 24.

*Reas. 3.* The last reason may be taken from the nature of sin, especially this sinne of procrastination or putting off our Repentance, when

when the Lord doth call vpon vs to repent; men will by degrees become to be hardned in their sins, and so past feeling: for that sinne that at the first or second cõmitting lies heauy vpon the conscience of the sinner, by often committing of it, it comes to be light; then to bee desired and delighted in; the forerunner of eternall death indeed, when men come once to that passe in sinning to bee past feeling. & so to delight in their sins. Oh! it is hard for such an one to be brought to Repentance for the same.

Let vs now make application of this vnto our selues.

First of all, this may serue to reproue such as no way regard the Lords gracious call, nor Number their days, till their *Vse* 1.

dayes be numbred, as his were who saw the fingers of a mans hand writing vpon the wall; Dan. 5. *God hath Numbred thy kingdome, and finished it.* If we should see a man almost wounded to death and would seeke for no remedy, but post it off from day to day, a long time togither, we would conclude, surely this man is either desperate or foolish.

Oh this is the strange dealing of the world, and men of the world, who though they know they are wounded with sinne, which without Repentance will one day wound them to death eternall, yet neuer seeke to haue the same cured, but put it off from day to day, and time to time, till at last their wounds proue incurable.

The foolish virgins that came

came not for mercy whilst the Lords doore was open, did at last stand without when there was no opening vnto them. Euen so our Sauiour tels vs of some in the latter day, that shal call and cry, *Lord, Lord, open vnto vs*: and yet the gate of mercy shall for euer be shut vpon them. Mat. 25. 10. 12.

Let these examples of Reprobate putters off, moue vs to preuent danger to come. *Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of Saluation*: If thou omittest this time, thou doest not know whether thou shalt euer haue the like offered thee againe. Many that haue neglected to prepare themselus when they might, afterwards would, but could not. Oh this may be thy case man, if thou regardest

deſt not the time of thy viſitation. Now the Lord ſeeks vnto thee, and by his Miniſters doth beſeech thee to bee reconciled vnto God; Oh do not lightly eſteeme of Gods call *now*, leſt the Lord eſteeme as light of thy call and cry *then*, when prayers and teares will come too late. Thou haſt, now *thy day* wherein God ſeemes to bee ſilent: Oh thinke of the day of the Lord, when hee will not be ſilent, but will exalt himſelfe in iudgment againſt all wicked and vngodly men. And whereas now hee ſhews himſelf a God of mercy if thou wilt lay hold of the ſame, he wil thē ſhew himſelfe a God of iuſtice, & ſo ſeuere in iudgmēt as the ſinner ſhall not be able to ſtand before him. The Lord Ieſus open our hearts to accept of his offered mercy. Se-

Secondly, this doctrine is for our inſtruction, that wee do not lightly eſteeme of Gods grace, when the ſame is offered vnto vs; for ſo ſaith the Apoſtle: *Deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſſe, and forbearance, and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſſe of God leadeth thee to repentance?* Do we heare of Gods patience and mercy, giuing vnto euery one a *Day*, that is, time of repentance: Remember that it will not alwaies bee day, there is a night of darknes comming, when we ſhall make our beds in the darke, euen in the land of darkneſſe. But let vs rather with *Abraham*, riſe vp betimes in the morning; not to ſacrifice our ſonnes, but our ſinnes. In our iudgements we al of vs confeſſe, that our ſinnes are to bee left, and

*Vſe 2.*

Rom. 2. 4.

and that God must bee serued; but wee cannot agree about the time when to begin. One saith, he will beginne when he is rich; another saith, he wil begin when he is free; another saith, when he is old: and thus men are like the people of the *Iewes*, who said: *The time is not yet come that wee should build the Temple.* But indeed, the time present is ours; we cannot promise to our selues one minute of an houre for the time to come. Many haue thought to haue liued a long time, that haue had an end quickly put vnto their dayes. The rich man in the Gospell, makes his little barnes great, as if hee would make his short life endlesse, and doth secure his estate for many yeares to come; wheras God did the same night require

Hag. 1.

require his ſoule to bee taken from him. And heere I might propound diuers motions to ſtir vs vp to the duty.

*Motiues* 1

Firſt, we are not ſure that wee ſhall liue till hereafter; for as S: *Iames* ſaith: *Our life is but as a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and afterwards vaniſheth away.* The old world thought themſelues ſure when they were eating and drinking; but then came the floud. The morning was faire when *Lot* went out of *Sodome*, and yet before night the *Sodomits* were deſtroied. So that if we deferre our repentance but a day or an houre, wee may bee preuented by death.

2

Secondly, if wee had a charter of our liues (as no man hath) and ſo were ſure to liue till hereafter: yet wee are not certaine that

that then we shall repent, for repentance is not in our power. And howsoeuer the Lord doth giue remission of Sinnes to all that repent, yet hee doth not giue repentance to all that sin: repentance is the proper worke of God, and it is in his power to bestow it on whom he will.

3 Thirdly, God is to bee serued betimes, and before all things; as our Sauiour teacheth: *First seeke the Kingdome of God and the righteousnesse therof, and al things shall be ministred vnto you.* Mat.6.33. Before we pray for our *daily bread*, we are taught to pray *Hallowed be thy name*: Teaching vs indeed, that we should seeke the sanctificatiõ of Gods name, & the doing of his will, before the foode wee liue by, much more before the sinful pleasures we perish by.

Fourth-

Fourthly and laſtly, the time of death which men moſt truſt vnto, men are then for the moſt part moſt grieuouſly tempted by Sathan, whoſe policy is euer then to be moſt buſie, when our end is neareſt; and in ſickneſſe men commonly are ſo full of ſorrow and paine, that they cannot prepare thēſelues as they would, and if they do, yet not ſo well as they would. In al which reſpects we ſee how dāgerous a thing it is to defer to repēt, & to let ſlip the preſent time of turning to God. 4

And thus much for the firſt part of this text; the petition: *Teach vs, O Lord, to number our dayes.* The reaſon of the petition followes:

*That we may apply our hearts to wiſedome.*

The meaning is, that ſeeing our

our life is so short heere, that we may duly consider the transitorinesse of the same, to the end we may not liue any lõger in sin, but may truely repent and walke on in a christian course, in faith and obedience, which indeed is true wisedome.

*Doctr.* A man neuer comes to be truly wise till hee esteemes of euery day as his last day. Math. 25

The Doctrine wee may learne hence is this, That a man neuer becomes truely wise till he can number his dayes; that is, esteeme of euery day as his last day, till he bee perswaded of the shortnesse of his time here, and prepare himselfe for a better life. This is plaine in the Gospell in the ten Virgins, whereof fiue were wise and fiue were foolish. Some had their lamps burning, and so entred into the Marriage Chamber; the other whited away the time, and so were

were for euer shut out, and so most iustly incurred the imputation of fooles. We haue this further cleared in that rich man in the gospel, who is therfore caled *Foole*, because hee put far from him the thoughts of death, and promised vnto himselfe many yeares to come; but the reason following will make the same cleare vnto vs. Luk. 12.

First, because such a man that thus thinkes of death, and the vncertainty of his being heere, is wise for his soule, in comparison of which wisedome, all other Arts and Sciences are but foolishnesse. *For what shall it profit a man to win the whole world, and lose his owne soule?* Now true wisedome indeed doth make a man prouide for the euerlasting welfare of his soule. And thus spiri- *Reason.* Matth. 16.

ſpiritually wiſe is hee that ſets death euer before him, and eſteemes of euery day as his laſt day.

*Vſe* 1. This ſerues then to condemne the iudgement of the world, and worldly men; who eſteeme ſuch onely wiſe, as haue a reaching head to buy & ſell, & know how to purchaſe lands & liuings. But marke here, the holy Ghoſt tells thee that thou art but a miſerable foole, if thou canſt not skill in this heauenly Arithmeticke, to number thy dayes, to thinke of the ſhortneſſe of thy life, thereby to bee humbled, to repent, and to prouide for thy change. But alas! who doth not ſee how careleſſe men are of this duty: neuer number their daies till their daies be numbered, and then ſend for the Miniſter; and then

then Good people pray for me, when thou wouldest be glad to put thy head in an awger hole, or that thou couldest by any means hide thy selfe from Gods presence, as many haue at that time desired. But what? would you haue the Minister to worke a miracle? Oh! it is the Lord must giue thee repentance: and thou that hast beene a stranger to God and his ordinance, and neuer desiredst to be acquainted with his wayes in thy life time, how canst thou thinke the Lord will accept of thy forced Repentance in thy death? Nay rather, it were a iust thing with God to recompence vengeance vpon thee, who like a *Foole*, hast liued a long time securely, and diddest neuer call to minde the day of thy death, nor neuer

thoughtest of the reckoning day to come.

*Vse 2.* Secondly, this may serue for our instruction, that as wee would be loath to be accompted fools or foolish men, void of all sauing wisedome, and that at the day of iudgement by Iesus Christ himselfe the wisedome of the Father: let vs begin to learne this one lesson, *To Number our dayes*: that is, to make accompt of euery day as the day of our death. This will make vs truely wise to God, for our soules. If men were thus perswaded of the shortnesse of their liues, and made accompt of euery day as the day of their death; how could they so loue the world, and neglect the euerlasting welfare of their owne soules?

And

And no maruell though many dye like *Nabal, fooles*, yea as beaſts indeed without any hope in their deaths, their hearts dying like ſtones within them: the reaſon of it is this, They neuer thought of death vntill it ſeiſed vpon them, and ſo with the fooliſh virgins muſt needs be taken vnprepared.

The benefits of this wiſedome.

Now the benefits that will come vnto vs heerby are many and great; for:

Firſt, this will be a meanes to humble a man with *Abraham, Behold Lord, I that am but duſt and aſhes, &c.* It would pull downe our Peacocks feathers, & make vs lay aſide our lofty lookes, if men did but conſider that euen this day they muſt dy and giue vp their accompt vnto God.

Secondly, the serious meditation and certaine perſwaſion of death, is an effectuall meanes to moue vs to Repentance. When as the Lord tels the *Nineuits*, that there remained but 40. dayes, and then it ſhould be deſtroyed, it is ſaid the *Nineuits* repented in ſackcloth & aſhes. What malefactor going to the place of execution, would commit the like villany, but rather confeſſe his ſin, and intreate euery one to pray for him?

*Conclu.* And thus haue we heard out of this petition of *Moſes*:

Firſt, that it is not in the breaſt of any man by nature to Number his days aright, vntill the Spirit of God become our Schoole-maiſter to inſtruct vs: The moſt holy and the moſt wiſe men that are, had

had neede to pray with *Moſes* heere, *Teach vs O Lord to Number our daies.*

Secondly, wee haue ſeene the ſhortneſſe and vncertainty of our life, ſet out vnto vs vnder the name of *Dayes*, to teach vs how to eſteeme aright of our life, not to reckon of many yeares to come: our life is ſhort.

Thirdly we haue heard that as our time is ſhort, ſo the ſame time and daies are Numbred with God; our time is an *appointed warfar*, our life is limited, and we haue our bounds ſet vnto our life which we cannot paſſe.

Fourthly, that this appointed time of ours is called our time: where wee conſidered how that the Lord doth giue vnto euery

man a time and day to repent in: which time being spent and gone, there then remaines no place for Repentance, though men do seeke it with teares; for then hath the Lord his *Day*, wherein he will be exalted, and man shall be put to silence.

And last of all, we haue heard that a man neuer comes to be truely wise vntill hee Number his days, and come to esteeme of euery day as his last day, that so he may prepare himselfe for death.

I wil now end as I begā, *Teach vs O Lord to Number our dayes, that wee may apply our hearts vnto wisedome.*

*FINIS.*

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